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SUBJECT CIA Recruitment

J TOM BROKAW: In this country, to help fight terrorists around the world, the CIA now has decided to call for the cops. J As NBC's Art Kent reports tonight, it is looking to hire police officers off the streets of America's big cities.

POLICE OFFICER: The color of the day today is yellow.

ART KENT: Street cops in New York City getting ready to make a drug bust, and now they're the target of a major recruiting effort by the Central Intelligence Agency.

A At a July seminar on terrorism at the CIA's Langley, Virginia headquarters, CIA Director William Casey asked civilian police officials to help in the CIA's effort to recruit cops with "street smarts." Intelligence officials say the fight against international terrorism and the war on drugs have forced a change in the traditional role of clandestine intelligence gathering and a change in the kinds of people the CIA wants.

A RAY S. CLINE: You may well want to hire someone who is familiar with the cocaine climate rather than, say, the technology transfer climate.

KENT: The CIA has stepped up its recruiting recently, taking out ads in newspapers and visiting college campuses. But its efforts to recruit working cops away from their departments is not meeting with universal acceptance. In Los Angeles, the police department says it needs all its people at home. New York's mayor says his city is happy to contribute.

MAYOR ED KOCH: But I don't think that the numbers that

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-2-

they're talking about have any impact at all upon our police department.

KENT: Police officers who have taken the CIA's employment test say the agency prefers single people, warns them they will have to pass drug and lie detector tests and serve overseas.

A CIA spokesman said these are not temporary jobs, but permanent staff positions. And unlike the well-known Marine Corps' recruiting pitch, the CIA wants a lot of good men and women.

Art Kent, NBC News, Washington.